

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE



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**Championship figure skating medals returned to Rosalynn Sumners;
Auction of other unclaimed property nets \$474,000**

Lynnwood, Wash., March 3, 2004 — The Department of Revenue returned three world championship figure skating medals to Rosalynn Sumners today after they had been misplaced by a bank that had displayed them for years.

Sumners received the medals at the Lynnwood Ice Center, where the Edmonds, Washington native learned to skate. "Home of Rosalynn Sumners" reads a banner still hanging above the rink.

Sumners won the medals at the world figure skating championships in Helsinki, Finland in 1983. She went on to win the silver medal in the 1984 Olympics in Sarajevo.

Pat Tate, Unclaimed Property manager for the Department of Revenue, hung the medals on Sumners in a re-creation of the 1983 award ceremonies. Sumners then gave him a big hug.



Pat Tate, Unclaimed Property Manager for the Department of Revenue, returned lost world figure skating championship medals to Edmond's Rosalynn Sumners

"This really means a lot to me that you returned these," Sumners said. "They're more than medals to me, because they represent years of hard work."

In 1984, Sumners lent the world championship medals – two golds and a silver—to a local Edmonds bank so it could display them in its lobby. The years passed, and when Sumners stopped by the bank to see about her medals, she discovered it had changed hands at least once and the current managers had no idea what had happened to the medals.

It turned out that someone at the bank had put them into a safe deposit box for safekeeping, but the owner wasn't identified. After five years, the bank turned the contents over the Department of Revenue as unclaimed property. The Department identified the owner as Sumners and made arrangements to return the medals.

Not every story has as happy an ending. After receiving the contents of safe deposit boxes from banks, the Department mails letters to the last-known addresses of the owners. But many have moved, died, or don't respond to the mailings. It also attempts to contact owners by other means. After five years, the Department by law has to auction off the contents, although the proceeds will still be available to the rightful owners or heirs in perpetuity.

Potential claimants can visit the Department's web site at <http://dor.wa.gov> to search for unclaimed property.

Last week, the Department auctioned 2,316 lots of unclaimed items in Kenmore. The auction brought in \$473,942, more than twice the appraised (wholesale) value of the items. Examples include \$13,500 for a two-carat diamond ring set in platinum, \$100 for a Ken Griffey Jr. rookie baseball card, and \$650 for a Revolutionary War letter dated May 29, 1778.

Other items included World War II German knives and daggers that brought \$450 to \$650 apiece, and a bag of teeth with gold fillings that drew a bid of \$50.

This was the first time that people could bid online as well as in person, and 44 percent of the items went to Internet bidders. The Department will not have another auction for three to four years.

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EDITORS NOTE: ORIGINAL COLOR PHOTO OF ROSALYNN SUMNERS IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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